

# Pathway to U.S. Citizenship

For an adult immigrant to become a U.S. citizen, he or she must go through the process of naturalization. The requirements of naturalization call for the immigrant to:

Demonstrate a basic knowledge of U.S. history, government, and civic principles



Swear an oath of allegiance to the United States



Be at least 18 years of age



Be a legally admitted permanent resident (green card holder)



Demonstrate an ability to read, write, speak, and understand basic English



Demonstrate an attachment to the principles and ideals of the U.S. Constitution



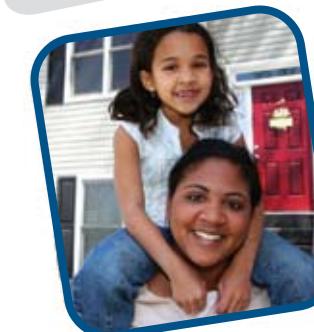
Demonstrate "good moral character" by behaving in a legal and acceptable manner during the 5 years as a permanent resident (or 3 years if married to and living with a U.S. citizen)



Receive a Certificate of Naturalization



Have been a U.S. permanent resident for at least 5 years (or at least 3 years if married to and living with a U.S. citizen)



Not have been outside of the United States for over 1 year at a time during the 5 years as a permanent resident (or 3 years if married to and living with a U.S. citizen)



Have been physically present in the United States for at least 30 months out of the past 5 years as a permanent resident (or 18 months out of the past 3 years if married to and living with a U.S. citizen)



Have lived within a state or USCIS District for at least 3 months before he or she applies

★ To learn more, visit [www.uscis.gov](http://www.uscis.gov) or call 1 800 375 5283

## Current Test or Redesigned Version

### Which version of the test to take?

Following the public introduction of the redesigned naturalization test on September 27, 2007, there will be one full year before naturalization applicants begin taking the revised test. This period will allow adult educators and immigrants working toward citizenship sufficient time to prepare for the redesigned test. The following guidelines will determine whether naturalization applicants will take the current test or the redesigned version:



### If an applicant:

- Applies before October 1, 2008, and is scheduled for his or her naturalization interview before October 1, 2008, he or she will take the current test.
- Applies before October 1, 2008 and is scheduled for his or her naturalization interview after October 1, 2008, he or she can choose to take the current test or the redesigned version.
- Applies after October 1, 2008, he or she will take the redesigned version.
- Is scheduled for his or her naturalization interview after October 1, 2009, regardless of when he or she applied, he or she will take the redesigned version.

## Preparing for the Test

### What study materials are available and how can I find English language, civics, and/or citizenship classes?



Following the public introduction of the redesigned naturalization test on September 27, 2007, there will be one full year before naturalization applicants begin taking the revised test. The USCIS Office of Citizenship will provide updated versions of its study materials, including the Civics Flash Cards and Learn About the United States: Quick Civics Lessons, to correspond with the content of the revised test. These study materials will be available in early 2008. The current versions of both the Civics Flash Cards and Learn About the United States: Quick Civics Lessons will remain available as long as the current test is administered. Additional study materials will also be introduced throughout the course of the one full year.

For many applicants, adult education classes are an excellent place to learn English and prepare for the naturalization test. Many local school districts, community colleges, libraries, and other community-based organizations offer English language and civics classes. These opportunities, however, are not centralized in one place. To find an appropriate class, try these options:

- Visit <http://www.WelcometoUSA.gov>.
- Look in the yellow pages of your telephone book under the heading "Language Schools."
- Contact your local public library and ask if they offer English language or citizenship classes.
- Call your local community college or school district and ask about adult education opportunities.
- Call or visit a local community-based organization or place of worship and ask if they offer English language or citizenship classes.

## About the Redesigned Naturalization Test

In the interest of creating a more standardized, fair, and meaningful naturalization process, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) recently completed a multi-year redesign of the naturalization test. The revised test, with an emphasis on the fundamental concepts of American democracy and the rights and responsibilities of citizenship, will help encourage citizenship applicants to learn and identify with the basic values we all share as Americans.

### Background

Over the past decade, several in-depth studies of the naturalization test revealed concerns with the test's content, how the test was being administered, and how it was being scored. To address these concerns, the federal government launched a test redesign in 2000. In April 2005, the USCIS Office of Citizenship took over responsibility for this redesign. A panel of adult education experts affiliated with Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL), U.S. history and government scholars, expert test development contractors, and other external stakeholders provided input into the redesign.

### Redesign Process

The major aim of the redesign process is to ensure that naturalization applicants have uniform, consistent testing experiences nationwide, and that the civics test can effectively assess whether applicants have a meaningful understanding of U.S. government and history. Following a basic U.S. history and civics curriculum, the redesigned test will serve as an important instrument to encourage civic learning and patriotism among prospective citizens.

To accomplish these goals, USCIS initially piloted a new test—with an overhauled English reading and writing section, as well as new history and government questions—in ten sites across the country. The feedback from this pilot was then used to finalize testing procedures, English reading and writing prompts, and a list of 100 new history and government questions. To ensure the pilot accounted for a representative sample of candidates with a variety of education levels, the test was also piloted at adult education sites nationwide.



## The Redesigned Naturalization Test

Office of Citizenship



U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services

# Components of the Redesigned Naturalization Test

